



SLB Autism YPPA Kota Solok: Creating Pathways to Independence for Children with Special Needs

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into how education is provided to children with special needs (CSN) at SLB Autism YPPA in Kota Solok, with the objective of fostering students' independence. Through observations, interviews, and systematic literature reviews, the study investigates critical aspects such as teachers' understanding of CSN, identifying students' interests and abilities, strategies for addressing children's issues, teaching methodologies, and their integration into inclusive education. Results show that SLB Autism YPPA Kota Solok adopts a personalized approach tailored to each student's individual needs, employing the Merdeka Curriculum and playful methods to enhance effective communication. Regular comprehensive evaluations focus on each student's unique potential. Nevertheless, there are ongoing challenges in inclusive education implementation, including the risk of inadvertent exclusion. The study highlights the necessity of a profound understanding of CSN, enhancing teacher skills, and creating a supportive inclusive environment to promote CSN's independence.

Keyword : Children with Special Needs (CSN), Independence

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INTRODUCTION

Special needs children (SNC) are individuals who necessitate specialized education and services to optimally realize their human potential. They require educational support, social services, counseling, and a range of other specialized assistance to address their life needs. A key factor in the growth of SNC is their autonomy. Autonomy is described as the preparedness and capacity of a person to be self-reliant, take initiative, resolve issues, and guide their actions towards achieving excellence.(Herman,et al.,2022)

According to Kosasih, ABK (children with special needs) are slow learners who face challenges and are unable to succeed if they attend regular schools. Children with mental, physical, intellectual, and emotional impairments are referred to as children with special needs (ABK) and therefore require specialized education. ABK are different from typical children, and as such, they are considered to need special encouragement because they are perceived as helpless. Every child has their own strengths and weaknesses. ABK require attention, whether through affection, learning, or social relationships, so that their potential talents can be developed and enhanced (Hidayat,et al.,2021).

Humans as social beings possess various differences that make them unique and interesting. These differences are not only physical but also in the abilities and development of each individual. One group with significant differences is children with special needs, including those who experience learning difficulties (Wardhani, 2023).

Children with special needs, particularly those with learning difficulties, often face challenges in achieving independence. Learning difficulties can negatively impact not only academic achievement but also the personal development of an individual. Therefore, it is important to understand and develop effective strategies to help these children achieve independence (Yuliana,et al.,2019).

The independence of children with special needs is closely related to their future quality of life and their ability to compete with individuals without limitations. The role of family and educational institutions is crucial in shaping the independence of these children. One method that can be used is the home visit program, which integrates various services for children, caregivers, and the community. Home visits provide

stimulation, play activities, education and parental support, as well as increasing community involvement (Herman,et al.,2022).

Independence in children with special needs can be defined as the ability to perform daily activities and overcome challenges with minimal assistance from others. According to Kanisius (2006), the characteristics of independence include: a tendency to solve problems rather than dwell on worries, not being afraid to take risks after considering the pros and cons, confidence in one's own judgment, and having better control over their life (Yuliana,et al.,2019).

In the context of children with learning difficulties, Lerner (2000) defines learning difficulties as a general term for various types of difficulties in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and arithmetic. This condition is not caused by physical or mental disabilities, but rather by difficulties in perceiving and processing information (Yuliana, et al.,2019).

By understanding the concept of independence and the characteristics of children with special needs, especially those who experience learning difficulties, we can develop more effective strategies to help them achieve independence and optimize their potential.

Children with special needs, especially those with autism, require a unique and comprehensive educational approach to optimally develop their potential. In response to this need, the Education and Child Services Foundation (YPPA) established the YPPA Autism Special School in Solok City, West Sumatra in 2004. This institution offers individually tailored educational programs, including early intervention, behavioral therapy, occupational therapy, and various other support services.

The YPPA Autism Special School in Solok City is a branch of the YPPA Autism Special School in Padang, located at Jln. Lettu Amran Bawah Bungo, VI Suku Village, Lubuk Sikarah District, Solok City, West Sumatra. This school not only focuses on academic achievement but also emphasizes the development of social skills, communication, and daily living skills, which are crucial for the independence of children with special needs.

This study aims to understand teachers' comprehension of children with special needs, identify the methods of screening for the interests and talents of children with special needs, recognize that children who are problematic might actually be geniuses,

understand the handling provided by teachers to problematic children, explore educational methods for children with special needs, and examine inclusive education for children with special needs at the YPPA Autism Special School, Solok City.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methods used are observation and interviews. Observations were conducted on teachers teaching children with special needs at SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City, and interviews were conducted directly with the principal of SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City. A systematic literature review approach was used to understand the education methods and independence of children with special needs. The literature search was conducted through various electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Sinta, and Scopus, which discuss education methods and the independence of children with special needs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to evaluate the impact of the education and therapy programs implemented at the Special School (SLB) for Autism under the Yayasan Pendidikan Peduli Autisma (YPPA) in Solok City on the independence of children with special needs. Data were collected through direct observation, interviews with teachers, and a systematic literature review to understand the educational methods and independence of children with special needs. The following are some key findings from this study:

a) Teachers' Understanding of Children with Special Needs

Teachers' understanding of children with special needs (CSN) is a crucial aspect in achieving CSN independence in inclusive schools. Based on the conducted research, the level of teachers' understanding of identifying CSN is still low. The results showed that 37% of teachers have very poor understanding, 23% have poor understanding, and 18% have limited understanding of CSN identification. This indicates that many teachers still lack adequate understanding to identify and handle CSN in inclusive schools. Furthermore, the research also revealed that teachers need training in CSN identification programs (42.5%) and the development of digital identification instruments (25%). This need indicates teachers' awareness of the necessity to improve

their competence in handling CSN, but it is not yet supported by adequate development programs (Salim,et al., 2017).

In line with these findings, other research also found that teachers' understanding of CSN assessment is still inadequate. Initial observations and interviews showed that "the assessments conducted by educators are not sufficient to provide information about the behavior of inclusive students." This demonstrates that, although assessment is an important aspect of inclusive education, many teachers still do not understand and master assessment techniques well (Kholisna,et al.,2023).

To address this issue, both studies highlighted the importance of teacher training and competency development. The research emphasized the need for CSN identification training programs (Salim,et al.,2017), while another study held seminars and focus group discussions (FGD) to enhance teachers' understanding of CSN assessment (Kholisna,et al.,2023). These efforts indicate that improving teacher competence is a crucial step in realizing effective inclusive education.

Additionally, both studies also highlighted the importance of collaboration among various parties in handling CSN. The research found that the schools they studied have established cooperation with relevant institutions such as district social services, health centers, and nearby hospitals. This collaboration is important to ensure that CSN receive comprehensive and integrated handling (Kholisna,et al.,2023).

In achieving CSN independence, teachers' adequate understanding of CSN identification, assessment, and handling becomes a very important foundation. Enhancing teacher competence through training, instrument development, and collaboration with various parties are strategic steps that need to be continuously developed and improved to realize quality inclusive education that supports CSN independence.

At SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City, the teachers have a fairly good conceptual understanding of autism, identifying it as a disorder that requires special therapy and applying learning approaches tailored to each child's needs through individual and group methods. Teachers there handle problematic children with a firm yet consistent approach, using methods such as advising and gently persuading without violence, and taking the child to an individual room if necessary. Additionally, their main focus is on developing the potential of autistic children by identifying and honing

their interests and talents through periodic assessments. Collaboration with parents is also prioritized, aiming to provide optimal understanding and therapy to support the child.

However, research shows that generally in inclusive schools, the level of teachers' understanding of CSN identification is still low, with 78% of teachers having inadequate understanding, and the need for CSN identification training programs and the development of digital identification instruments for teachers has not yet been met. Although SLB Autisma YPPA has conducted assessments to identify children's interests and talents, in general, teachers' understanding of CSN assessment is still inadequate in many schools.

Although SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City demonstrates a fairly good understanding and practice in handling children with special needs, especially autistic children, there is still a general gap in teachers' understanding and competence regarding CSN in inclusive schools. Continuous efforts are needed to improve teachers' understanding and skills through training, instrument development, and collaboration with various parties to realize quality inclusive education.

b) Methods for Identifying Interests and Talents of Children with Special Needs

The different characteristics and conditions of children with special needs (CSN) should not be a basis for thinking that they do not have potential and abilities, such as interests and talents in certain fields. Essentially, every individual has their own interests and talents, including CSN. Children with special needs have the same rights as other normal children to develop and achieve success with their various interests and talents. As concrete evidence, there are several CSN who have successfully developed their interests and talents, such as well-known figures in the world, namely Tom Cruise and Helen Keller. Tom Cruise is a famous Hollywood actor who was diagnosed with dyslexia, a disorder in reading and writing. Meanwhile, Helen Keller experienced hearing and vision impairments but succeeded in becoming an American author, lecturer, and political activist (Yuniatari,et al.,2021).

In developing the interests and talents of CSN, appropriate handling is very important. In his research, Ahmad Atabik revealed that the purpose of developing the interests and talents of children is so that they can learn and, in the future, work in fields they are interested in according to their abilities (Yuniatari,et al.,2021).

Basically, the interests and talents of CSN need to be built and developed from an early age. Interest is a sense of attraction, attention, and desire that someone has towards something without any external encouragement. Talent, on the other hand, is an inherent ability as potential that still needs to be developed and trained to be realized. The development of these interests and talents aims for children to have an attraction to something that can then be developed optimally and maximally. Additionally, CSN must also have the ability and skills to produce something so that they are no longer looked down upon by society. Therefore, the interests and talents of CSN need to be developed as a provision for their future (Yuniatari,et al.,2021).

Interest can be the cause of an activity and also the result of participation in an activity. Therefore, interest in learning is a tendency to learn to gain information, knowledge, skills through effort, teaching, or experience. According to Gie (1998), interest means being busy, attracted, or fully engaged in an activity because of the awareness of its importance. Interest in learning forms a certain academic attitude that is very personal to each student (Aisah, 2020).

Therefore, the interest in learning must be cultivated by each student. Others only strengthen and nurture the interest or maintain the interest that someone already has. If the interest in learning is obtained, it will in turn foster concentration or seriousness in learning. Interest is related to certain values. Reflecting on the values in learning activities is very useful for arousing interest. For example, studying to pass exams, become a champion, become an expert in a field, satisfy curiosity, or earn a degree or get a job. Thus, interest in learning does not need to start from grand values or motivations (Aisah, 2020).

SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City takes a comprehensive approach in supporting the development of the interests and talents of children with special needs (CSN). They recognize that each CSN has unique potential that needs to be discovered and developed, in line with the principle that this development is crucial to preparing them for an independent future. By conducting careful individual assessments, this school aims to identify the emerging interests and talents of each child from an early age while providing appropriate support for their development.

Teachers at SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City are actively involved in observing and directing the development of children during the learning process,

focusing not only on academic aspects but also on developing other skills such as sensory and courage. They emphasize the importance of collaboration with parents and provide personalized educational programs to ensure that each child's potential interests and talents can be optimally actualized, supporting their long-term aspirations.

c) Children with Special Needs Can Be Geniuses

Children with special needs who possess extraordinary intelligence or talents are recognized within the category of inclusive education. Based on the available literature, several important points can be drawn: recognition of diversity, avoidance of negative labeling, curriculum adjustments, flexible learning methods, and tailored evaluations. Inclusive education encompasses all student differences, including both children with special needs and gifted children.

As mentioned in research, "Inclusive education accommodates all types of student differences, whether they are children with special needs or typical children. Inclusive education strives to respond to various student needs according to their abilities and potential" (Siahaan, 2022). Moreover, inclusive education aims to avoid negative labeling of children with special needs, including gifted children. The research states, "Inclusive education seeks to avoid negative names for children with disabilities with more positive and supportive names" (Siahaan, 2022).

Curriculum adjustments are crucial to meet the needs of genius children with special needs. The research indicates, "The curriculum or teaching materials given to children with special needs must match their requirements." Additionally, flexible learning methods are necessary to develop the potential of gifted children (Siahaan, 2022). The research emphasizes, "In inclusive education, the methods used must be flexible, not rigid, and provide ease for children with special needs to develop their potential and skills" (Siahaan, 2022). Evaluations also need to be adjusted to each child's capabilities, including gifted children, as noted in the research, "The evaluations conducted need to be tailored to the needs of the child, including children with special needs" (Siahaan, 2022).

With these approaches, inclusive education can help genius children with special needs to optimally develop their potential while learning alongside other children in an inclusive environment. Programs like the Social Inclusive Education Project (SIEP) play a significant role in identifying and developing such potential through initial

assessments and customized educational programs (Individualized Education Program) (Azizah et al., 2022).

Although the literature reviewed in this research does not specifically address children with special needs who have extraordinary intelligence, there are examples of children with special needs who possess unique potential and strengths that can be developed. For instance, EG is an 18-year-old child with visual impairments who has significant potential in vocal abilities. The literature notes that EG has a beautiful voice and can recite religious chants well. EG received skills training to enhance his abilities in reading and memorizing the Quran, demonstrating that despite visual limitations, EG has a special talent that can be further honed (Azizah et al., 2022).

Another example is AA, a 10-year-old child with Down syndrome who shows high enthusiasm for learning. The literature records that AA has a great eagerness to learn and enjoys the learning process. Despite his limitations, AA's enthusiasm for learning is a vital asset for developing his potential. Additionally, there is NL, a 12-year-old child with speech delays, who exhibits high self-confidence. The research describes NL as a confident child who always takes on a leadership role in his group, despite unclear speech. NL's self-confidence and leadership skills indicate that he has significant potential that can be further developed, even with his speech limitations (Azizah et al., 2022).

In fostering the independence of children with special needs, it is important to focus on their strengths and potential, not just their limitations. This approach can help these children discover and develop their unique talents and abilities, ultimately supporting their independence in the future.

Children with autism at the YPPA Autism Special School in Solok City show remarkable potential, with some alumni succeeding in working at major companies in Jakarta or continuing their education abroad. This proves that children with special needs have abilities that can be developed to a high level. For example, Arif (a pseudonym), an 11-year-old child who often jokes and appears unserious in class, can answer questions well and demonstrate good understanding when asked. This shows that a child who appears "problematic" may have good cognitive abilities. The YPPA Autism Special School in Solok conducts assessments to recognize children's interests and talents. If a child shows interest in a specific field, such as music, the school will

develop that talent, emphasizing an approach focused on developing each child's unique potential. In 2016, children from this school performed at the governor's auditorium, proving that children with special needs can showcase their talents to the public.

This special school implements learning methods tailored to each child's needs, including individualized learning, allowing the development of each child's unique potential. The school also emphasizes that although autistic children are often considered "problematic" due to their condition, many have exceptional talents and potential in specific areas. Examples from the literature include EG, who is vocally gifted despite visual impairments, and NL, who is confident despite speech delays. This analysis highlights the importance of viewing children with special needs holistically, focusing on their strengths and potential, not just their limitations. This research supports the idea that children with special needs can have extraordinary intelligence or talents in certain fields. It is important to identify, acknowledge, and develop this potential through appropriate and individualized educational approaches.

d) Handling Provided by Teachers for Problematic Children

Handling problematic children with special needs (ABK) by teachers is a crucial aspect in the effort to achieve independence for ABK. Based on various studies, there are several strategies that teachers can apply. First, teachers need to adjust their teaching methods to meet the specific needs of students. Teachers should adapt their teaching methods to suit students with special needs, for example, by providing explanations of difficult words beforehand when teaching reading. This approach helps ABK to better understand the material and reduces learning barriers they might face. Additionally, it is important to adjust tasks and evaluations. Students with various disabilities require adaptations in completing tasks both in class and at home. Inclusive education strategies that can be implemented include working in groups that combine regular students and ABK, as well as providing extra time to complete tasks. This approach allows ABK to be more active in learning and boosts their confidence (Larosa et al., 2022).

Besides adapting teaching methods and tasks, collaboration between regular teachers and special assistant teachers is vital for effective handling of ABK. The openness of regular teachers to special assistant teachers about ABK information in the classroom will facilitate the assistants in understanding the issues faced and the needs that must be met in inclusive schools. This collaboration enables the development of

individual programs that meet the needs of ABK. Finally, evaluating ABK learning outcomes requires a flexible and comprehensive approach. Assessment in inclusive education must be flexible, continuous, authentic, and comprehensive, tailored to the competencies and specific needs of each individual. This approach ensures accurate assessment of ABK's abilities and provides an accurate picture of their development (Larosa et al., 2022).

To address the difficulties faced by children with special needs (ABK), teachers need to have a thorough understanding of educational psychology. This understanding is crucial to ensure that the teaching and learning process runs effectively and purposefully. Some strategies that teachers can implement include providing guidance and counseling, motivating and facilitating students' learning interests, creating a conducive learning atmosphere, interacting appropriately with students, and conducting fair assessments. Teachers are expected to guide ABK students who face various life problems, such as friendships and careers, which can affect their learning process. With educational psychology principles, teachers can provide appropriate guidance and counseling for ABK students who face learning or social problems (Sakerebau, et al., 2018).

Teachers also need to have the ability to facilitate and motivate ABK students' learning interests by developing their potential, including talents, intelligence, and interests. One effective way is to reward ABK students who show progress or achievements. Moreover, it is important for teachers to create an effective learning environment so that every ABK student can develop well. This can be done by designing good lesson plans, using engaging teaching methods, and preparing suitable teaching aids. Good interaction with students, both inside and outside the classroom, and fair assessment based on students' performance and effort are also very important (Sakerebau, et al., 2018).

By implementing these strategies, it is hoped that teachers can help ABK students achieve independence and develop their potential optimally, making the understanding and application of educational psychology principles by teachers the key to success in handling problematic ABK students in schools.

Based on observations and interviews at SLB Autisma YPPA in Solok City, several important aspects can be highlighted regarding how teachers at this school

handle children with special needs (ABK) who face challenges. SLB Autisma YPPA applies individual learning methods with a ratio of one teacher to one child or even more, according to the needs of each student. The preferred approach is consistency and firmness in dealing with autistic children who require special approaches, including giving them time to calm down before continuing instructions if they experience difficulties. SLB Autisma YPPA also offers various supportive therapy services, demonstrating a holistic approach in assisting ABK. However, there is room for improvement in the flexibility of student evaluation, as well as for better integration of educational psychology principles into their daily practices.

e) Special Needs Education Methods

Special needs education requires approaches and methods tailored to the characteristics and needs of each child. Based on research conducted, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for children with special needs in Special Schools (SLB) has shown positive results. One crucial aspect of special needs education methods is adapting learning to each child's learning phase and abilities. The Merdeka Curriculum divides learning into 6 phases (A, B, C, D, E, & F) from elementary to high school levels. This approach enables teachers to design more targeted and effective learning experiences for each child with special needs (Utama,et al.,2023).

Assessment is a key component in special needs education methods. Within the Merdeka Curriculum, three types of assessments are used: diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Diagnostic assessment is used to understand the needs and characteristics of students, while formative and summative assessments help teachers monitor students' learning progress. Flexibility in learning is also a hallmark of special needs education methods within the Merdeka Curriculum. Learning can be adjusted to the local context, content, and students' abilities, allowing teachers to adapt teaching materials and methods to the specific needs of each child with special needs (Utama ,et al., 2023).

Project-based approaches are also used in special needs education. This method aims to develop students' skills and character, while fostering the formation of the Pancasila Student Profile. Through this approach, children with special needs can learn more actively and contextually. In practice, these methods have shown positive outcomes. According to research, 66.1% of SLB teachers stated that the implementation

of the Merdeka Curriculum for children with special needs falls into the appropriate category. This indicates that the methods applied in the Merdeka Curriculum are sufficiently effective in supporting the education of children with special needs (Utama,et al.,2023).

However, it is important to note that the success of implementing these methods also depends on the readiness and abilities of teachers. The importance of training and developing teachers' competencies in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum is crucial. The schools involved in the study have made various efforts such as in-house training, workshops, and regular discussions among teachers to address and find solutions to challenges encountered in curriculum implementation (Utama,et al., 2023).

In educating children with special needs (ABK), selecting the right teaching method is key to success. One effective method is the fun game approach or enjoyable games. Research has shown a significant impact of fun game methods on effective communication among children with special needs. Fun game methods utilize game technology development as a learning medium. Educational games are designed to serve as learning media through materials containing text, video, audio, images, and animations. The goal is to provide a deeper understanding of the learning material. This method is highly suitable for children with special needs, especially autistic children who have difficulty in communication and socialization (Awari, 2023).

Research results show a correlation coefficient of 0.62 and a determination coefficient of 38.44% between fun game methods and effective communication among children with special needs. This proves that fun game methods have a strong influence on improving the communication abilities of children with special needs. This method helps create a fun learning atmosphere, thereby increasing the enthusiasm for learning among children with special needs. Besides fun game methods, effective communication also plays a crucial role in ABK education. Effective communication can bring about attitude changes in children, which can be observed during the communication process (Awari, 2023).

The application of fun game methods and effective communication in ABK education aligns with the concept of Islamic education. Islamic education aims to develop the full potential of humans, both physically and spiritually, to form a complete Muslim personality. By combining fun game methods and effective communication,

educators can help children with special needs develop their potential optimally. This research emphasizes the importance of selecting the right learning methods for children with special needs. Fun game methods have proven effective in enhancing communication and learning enthusiasm among ABK. However, it is important to remember that the success of these methods is also influenced by other factors such as the school environment and facilities (Awari, 2023).

The YPPA Solok City Autism SLB has adopted the Merdeka Curriculum as the foundation for the education of their special needs children, from elementary to high school levels. They utilize six learning stages that can be adjusted to meet each child's individual needs, reflecting the principles of inclusion they apply.

Their approach involves comprehensive assessment, including diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to carefully understand and track each student's development. Additionally, they incorporate games and game technology as part of their teaching methods, which has been effective in enhancing communication skills among children, especially those with autism.

Thus, this approach underscores the commitment of YPPA Solok City Autism SLB in promoting inclusion and developing the holistic potential of every child.

f) Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs

Inclusive education is a crucial step towards achieving independence for children with special needs (ABK). This educational system integrates ABK with other children in the same learning environment, providing them with opportunities to develop their potential and social skills optimally.

Inclusive education is defined as an educational system that includes children with special needs learning together with their peers in regular schools closest to their homes, while also providing services tailored to their individual needs. This concept emphasizes the integration of children with special needs with typically developing peers, whether partially or fully, in social and academic aspects. The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia aims to provide equal opportunities to all learners who have physical, emotional, mental, and social differences, or who have exceptional intellectual abilities and/or talents, to receive quality education according to their needs and abilities. Furthermore, inclusive education aims to create an educational

environment that values diversity and is non-discriminatory towards all learners (Masithah et al., 2023).

In its implementation, inclusive education requires readiness from various parties, including schools, teachers, and the community. One important effort is to enhance teachers' understanding and skills in handling ABK. Specialized training, such as sign language training, can be a supportive factor in facilitating the teaching process in inclusive-based schools and madrasahs. Despite the numerous benefits of inclusive education, its implementation still faces various challenges. One of these challenges is the lack of public knowledge about ABK and the difficulty in communicating with children with special needs, especially the deaf. To address this, intensive socialization and training are needed for the broader community, not limited to teachers in special schools (Masithah et al., 2023).

The community plays a crucial role in supporting the success of inclusive education. Public understanding and acceptance of ABK can help create an inclusive environment, not only in schools but also in society at large. Training and socialization on ABK and how to communicate with them, such as using sign language, can enhance the community's ability to interact and support the development of ABK (Masithah et al., 2023).

Inclusive education is a critical step towards achieving independence for children with special needs. By integrating ABK into the regular education system, providing training for teachers and the community, and creating an inclusive environment, we can pave the way for ABK to develop their potential optimally and become independent individuals in society.

Inclusive education for children with special needs (ABK) is an effort to provide equal opportunities in education. However, the implementation of inclusive schools in Indonesia still faces various challenges that may inadvertently exclude ABK.

One of the main challenges is the process of accepting ABK students in inclusive schools. Despite aiming for inclusivity, inclusive schools often categorize and select ABK for admission. As found in a study at an inclusive school in Central Java, the acceptance of ABK is based on specific criteria such as "having sufficient self-management" and "not disrupting the environment". This selection process can be seen

as a form of "dividing practice" that separates and categorizes ABK (Azzahra,et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the treatment of ABK in inclusive schools often still distinguishes them from regular students. For example, the presence of Special Guidance Teachers (GPK) and additional assignments for ABK. Despite good intentions, this can reinforce differences and make ABK feel like "the other" in the school environment. The learning process in inclusive schools can also be an exclusionary instrument for ABK. Research shows that teachers often become "one-way lecturers" in communication with ABK students (Azzahra,et al.,2023).

Interestingly, this exclusionary process is not always conscious and can even occur through efforts considered inclusive. For instance, the use of "motherly instincts" by teachers in dealing with ABK initially arose out of ignorance but has been institutionalized as a special approach that can only be gained after years of experience. Furthermore, these processes can ultimately shape the subjectivity of ABK themselves. ABK may internalize their position as "being different" and strive to adapt, such as feeling embarrassed when accompanied by a GPK in higher grades (Azzahra,et al., 2023).

These findings indicate that inclusive education, despite its good intentions, can ironically become an instrument of exclusion for ABK if not implemented carefully. Therefore, a paradigm shift is needed in viewing inclusive education. The focus should not only be on accommodating ABK but also on preparing the environment, including regular students and teachers, to accept and support diversity (Azzahra,et al.,2023).

Inclusive education is a crucial step towards achieving independence for children with special needs. By integrating ABK into the regular education system, providing training for teachers and the community, and creating an inclusive environment, we can pave the way for ABK to develop their potential optimally and become independent individuals in society.

Based on observations from the Autistic SLB YPPA Kota Solok and information gathered regarding inclusive education, it can be concluded that they adopt an approach to integrate children with special needs (ABK) into the same learning environment as other children. Although SLB operates as a special school, they implement strategies to support inclusion by using individual and classical learning methods. Their main focus

is not only on academic achievement but also on developing social skills and communication for ABK. However, there are challenges to overcome such as costs and parental involvement in the education process of these children.

Autistic SLB YPPA Kota Solok also prepares children for the transition to inclusive schools by providing them with the necessary basic skills. However, it should be noted that there is a risk of unintentional exclusion through selection processes and different treatment in inclusive schools. To address this, active involvement from the community and a better understanding from all parties involved, including teachers and parents, are crucial to creating an inclusive educational environment that supports ABK.

CONCLUSION

This study discusses the implementation of education for children with special needs at the SLB Autisma YPPA Kota Solok, aimed at enhancing student independence. The school adopts a comprehensive and personalized educational approach, utilizing a customized "Merdeka Curriculum" tailored to the individual needs of the children. Teachers have a deep understanding of these needs and apply a consistent yet sensitive approach. The primary focus of the school is to develop each student's unique interests and talents, using methods such as individualized learning, project-based learning, and fun game activities to enhance effective communication.

Despite demonstrating positive practices, SLB Autisma YPPA Kota Solok faces challenges in implementing inclusive education in Indonesia, including the risk of unintended exclusion. Therefore, this research emphasizes the importance of a profound understanding of children with special needs, the development of teacher competencies, and the creation of an inclusive environment that supports their independence. Successful inclusive education requires collaboration among schools, teachers, parents, and the community, as well as a paradigm shift in approaching children with special needs. In conclusion, SLB Autisma YPPA Kota Solok has implemented commendable practices in educating children with special needs, but there is still room for improvement and further development in a comprehensive inclusive education system.

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